

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for playing a wagering game having a special payout with a first payout and a second payout, the method comprising:
 - conducting a basic game having a randomly selected outcome;
 - presenting a side-wager option for a player to be eligible for the special payout; and
 - in response to the player selecting the option to be eligible for the special payout, crediting the player the first payout when a first randomly selected outcome occurs in the basic game and crediting the player the second payout when a second randomly selected outcome occurs in the basic game.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising crediting the player a third payout when a third randomly selected outcome occurs in the basic game.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the special payout is a progressive payout.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the first payout is a bonus game.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the randomly selected outcome comprises a plurality of symbols.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein each of the plurality of symbols is a card from a deck of playing cards.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein the wagering game is a slot machine and each of the plurality of symbols is a reel symbol.

8. A method for playing a wagering game on a gaming terminal, the wagering game having a progressive payout with a first payout and a second payout, the method comprising:

conducting a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of the basic game;
presenting an option for a player to be eligible for the progressive payout; and
in response to the player selecting the option to be eligible for the progressive payout, awarding the first payout when a first randomly selected outcome is achieved in the basic game and awarding the second payout when a second randomly selected outcome is achieved in the basic game.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the conducting step comprises choosing at least one of a plurality of paylines to play and choosing a wager amount for each of the plurality of paylines chosen.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the presenting step only occurs if all of the plurality of paylines are chosen.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the awarding step is performed by a controller in the gaming terminal.

12. A gaming system for playing a wagering game having a special payout with a first payout and a second payout, the gaming system comprising a gaming terminal for playing a basic game having a randomly selected outcome, the gaming terminal having a side-wager input device for allowing a player to be eligible to win the special payout wherein, in response to activation of the side-wager input device, the gaming terminal credits the player the first payout when a first randomly selected outcome is achieved in the basic game and the gaming terminal credits the player the second payout when a second randomly selected outcome is achieved in the basic game.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the special payout is a progressive jackpot.

14. The system of claim 12, wherein the first payout is a bonus game jackpot.
15. The system of claim 12, wherein the side-wager input device is a button or a key.
16. The system of claim 12, wherein the first and second randomly selected outcomes comprise a plurality of symbols.
17. The system of claim 16, wherein each of the plurality of symbols is a card from a deck of playing cards.
18. The system of claim 16, wherein the gaming terminal is a slot machine and each of the plurality of symbols is a standard slot machine symbol.
19. The gaming system of claim 12, further comprising a plurality of gaming terminals for conducting wagering games, each of the plurality of gaming terminals having the side-wager input device.
20. The gaming system of claim 19, further comprising signage located above and coupled to the plurality of gaming terminals, the signage displaying the special payout and for receiving a signal from one of the plurality of gaming terminals that it is eligible to win a special payout.
21. The gaming system of claim 20, wherein the signage includes a signage controller for controlling an outcome of the special payout on one of the plurality of gaming terminals.
22. The gaming system of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of gaming terminals includes a gaming terminal controller, the gaming terminal controller being in communication with the signage controller.

23. The gaming system of claim 19, wherein each of the plurality of gaming terminals are identical machines.

24. The gaming system of claim 19, wherein the special payout is a progressive payout.

25. The gaming system of claim 19, wherein the first payout is a bonus game payout.

26. A gaming terminal for playing a wagering game, comprising:
a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of the basic game;
a progressive payout having a first payout and a second payout; and
an input device for allowing a player to become eligible for the progressive payout;
wherein, in response to the input device being activated, the gaming terminal awards the player the first payout when a first randomly selected outcome is achieved and awards the player the second payout when a second randomly selected outcome is achieved.

27. The gaming terminal of claim 26, wherein in response to the input device being activated, the gaming terminal awards the player a third payout when a third randomly selected outcome is achieved.